RG104 E-1 Box 190

The Mint of the United States at Philadelphia,
Superintendent's Office,

20th June, 1895.

Hon. Herman Kretz,

Superintendent U. S. Mint.

Sir:--

In response to your inquiry of 19th instant, as to whether in my judgment, the award of contract should in any case be made to other than the lowest bidder. I have to say,

That the lowest bids for supplies to this Department are acceptable with the following few exceptions where I give reasons for the belief that the lowest prices will not get the cheapest goods.

1st---There were 9 bids for 450 tons "Highland Broken Coal hand picked and screened", the lowest bid being $4.32 and the highest $5.75. I have reason to know that such coal cannot be had in car load lots at station for the price named in lowest bid, and yet it would be difficult to prove that coal delivered here was not that contracted for.

On the other hand I am satisfied that the highest bidders do not offer an equivalent for the high price.

Besides the heat giving qualities, the question of Ash from

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our coal is an important item, since all our ashes are barreled and sold as "Sweeps", other things being equal, the less the Ash the better economy.

I have examined the only available samples viz: the best "Highland Broken" selected--and the coal furnished us the past year by Markman & Hauser, and find that the latter while wholly satisfactory as to heating qualities carries less ash than the best Highland sample I have.

I therefore recommend that the bid of Markman & Hauser at $4.60 be accepted.

There were 9 bids, the average being $4.81.

In the matter of Crucibles the question of reliability and durability is of prime importance. The charge for a #70 crucible costing say $1.50, is about $90.000 in gold bullion--and over extended trials we have found the Taylor Crucible to stand as high as 35 such melts, while the average was 25 melts. They are in use at the San Francisco and New Orleans Mints, and have stood the test at this Mint for a long series of years against all competetors.

The Seidel Crucible is unknown to us, and in the absence of any samples or data as to its qualities I should advise against their adoption even at the slightly less cost per piece.

If samples had been furnished earlier we would have given

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them a comparative test. There will now be no opportunity for this until late in July--after the list of bids will have been acted on. No samples have been furnished.

I therefore recommend that Taylor & Sons' bid be accepted.

I advise that no award be made for Ingot Copper.

Very respectfully,

L. A. Smith

Melter and Refiner.

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1092

Mint of the United States at Philadelphia, Pa.,

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE,

June 20th, 1895.

D. R. Boyle
Melter & Refiner
~~Superintendent~~.

Relative to bids for Coal &c. for fiscal year ending June 30/96

(20)

Recd
June 21. 1895

No. of Enclosures,

NARA RG104, Entry 1, Box 190

[Abstract:] Relative to bids for coal &c. for fiscal year ending June 30 /95. (20)

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Superintendent's Office,
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On the other hand I am satisfied that the highest bidders do not offer an equivalent for the high price.

Besides the heat giving qualities, the question of Ash from our coal is an important item, since all our ashes are barreled and sold as "Sweeps", other things being equal, the less the Ash the better economy.

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Very respectfully,
D.K. Tuttle
Melter and Refiner.